

SECURITY INFORMATION

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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### Political Orientation of the Army

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2. The purges in the Officers' Corps mainly affected the older members of it, especially officers who had served with the British Army. The greater number of these were purged immediately after the February putsch. A series of other purges followed. Although the Communists knew that they could not fully rely on the remainder of the Officers' Corps, they allowed them to remain in the services partly because of the lack of a sufficient number of officers and partly because they hoped that by thorough political indoctrination they would be able to persuade them to co-operate with the regime. They were only successful in the case of opportunistic officers who pretended allegiance for the sake of a career. The majority of those left pretended loyalty solely in order to secure their mere livelihood. The case of younger members of the Officers' Corps, who were graduated from officers' schools after 1948 or who were called up from reserve is different. These men had already been selected solely from reliable Communist families and in many cases had had no previous education. In order to secure the loyalty of these officers, they get quick promotion and are placed in responsible positions. From the point of view of political reliability the Officers' Corps of the Czechoslovak Army could be divided into three groups, the first consisting of old officers who are career-minded (about 10%), the second consisting of old officers who pretend to be loyal to the regime for reasons of economic survival (about 30%) and the third consisting of young officers and officers re-activated from reserves (about 60%). About 25% of the members of this last group are opposed to the regime. These are young officers.

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graduates of the Military Academy in the years between 1945 and 1948, who had still been educated in the democratic spirit. Under these circumstances, the present Communist regime in Czechoslovakia cannot fully rely on its Officers' Corps. Enlisted men undergoing basic military training are even less reliable. A large percentage of these come from farms and constitute the strongest reactionary element in the Army. The two-year basic service, which is nowadays performed according to the Soviet pattern, makes military service distasteful and in no way consolidates the position of the Communists in the country.

3. The political education of the members of the Army has not met with as much success as expected by the Communists. In the case of older officers the political schooling has taken on the form of an additional burden which takes up much free time, as well as Sundays and holidays, so that aversion and resistance to everything Communist has grown with the intensification of the schooling. In the case of younger officers, however, the political schooling is registering some degree of success. The younger officers come to military schools already faithful Communists, more susceptible to propaganda, and staunch supporters of the regime. Apart from this they get preferential treatment as compared with their older colleagues. Hatred of the West has been successfully planted among them.

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